

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 2, 2017

The Honorable Donald Trump  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As a former sex crimes prosecutor, I take the issue of sexual assault prevention and offering support to survivors of sexual assault seriously. I have held the hand of a sexual assault survivor while she tells her story of being sexually assaulted for the first time. The pain of sexual assault is one that no one should be subjected to, especially students on our college campuses.

It is my experience with these cases that has shaped my thinking on how to best deal with the issue of sexual assault on college campuses and guided my work with a bipartisan coalition in the Senate to introduce the Campus Accountability and Safety Act. Our legislation increases protections for students and increases the overall fairness of the campus disciplinary process. This fairness is a vital component of our legislation and any work that the Department of Education does. Through numerous town halls, Congressional hearings, roundtables and an expansive survey of college campuses, this topic is one that has been reviewed extensively. If we're going to turn the tide against sexual violence, survivors must be protected, empowered, and given the confidence that if they make the difficult choice to report a crime, they will be treated with respect and taken seriously. All students must trust the campus process.

I believe your administration shares the goal of ensuring that survivors are supported, but the recent decisions by Secretary DeVos and Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Candice Jackson to rescind the Department's guidance on campus sexual violence is not only creating confusion for colleges and universities in the midst of their academic cycle but it also fails to fully protect students and offer the needed support for survivors. While I understand the goal to produce new regulations through a longer rule making process, these recent actions to turn the current system on its head will do little to advance meaningful policy changes.

Over the past several months, I have shared my concerns with Secretary DeVos on her current strategy, but the Secretary has not yet responded. It is with this in mind that I ask to speak with you about the Campus Accountability and Safety Act, how the administration can fully support survivors while protecting the rights of all students and how we can work together in a bipartisan manner to ensure the safety of our college campuses. I look forward to hearing from you and your staff on this important topic.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
United States Senator